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Background

According to the [Terms of Reference](#) for EWG OWR, the group has been tasked to produce, in 2016, and in 2017, a report on the finalized and developing integrated oiled wildlife response plans. The 2016 report can be found [here](#).

EWG OWR 9-2017 decided to focus on the topics planning, training, exercises and incidents for the 2017 report. The Meeting further decided to make the reporting based on a reporting template prepared by the Chair of EWG OWR and the Secretariat. The request for as well as the template was circulated on 5 December 2017 to EWG OWR contacts with the deadline 15 January 2018 for sending the filled template.

Reports have so far been received from Denmark, Germany, Latvia and Poland.

The aim is to have the final report submitted to RESPONSE 24-2018, which will be held on 10-12 April 2018 for consideration and endorsement. The document submission deadline is on 20 March 2018 for the meeting.

Action requested

The Meeting is invited to

- take note of the reports submitted by Denmark, Germany, Latvia and Poland,
- discuss the structure of the report to be submitted to RESPONSE 24-2018 and decide on how to proceed with finalizing the report.

Contracting Parties, which have not yet submitted their reports are invited to do so as soon as possible.

Reports by Contracting Parties on OWR activities in 2017 for the EWG OWR report 2017

Country: Denmark

Report submitted by: Henrik Lykke Sørensen, The Danish Environmental Protection Agency

Report on self-assessment categories:

1. Planning and integration

The Royal Danish Navy is responsible for national contingency arrangements. Maritime Assistance Service holds the responsibility for managing pollution incidents. Danish Defence Operational Staff is responsible for aerial surveillance while aerial surveillance missions have been outsourced to Norwegian company Sundt Air. The Danish Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) and regional or local councils are responsible for shoreline clean-up. Local councils manage pollution response in harbours and share responsibility with the Danish Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for restoration.

The Danish Environmental Protection Agency has responsibility for planning and strategy. The Danish Nature Agency has the responsibility for oiled wildlife response and field management. The primary oiled wildlife response strategy is field euthanasia. Birdlife Denmark can rehabilitate Species of special concern (e.g. IUCN or HELCOM Red List). If Wildlife rehabilitators are allowed to rescue and rehabilitate wildlife; this will be a local, ad hoc decision.

The contingency plan is under revision.

2. Training

Field euthanasia will be carried out by experienced employees or hunters. Activities will be coordinated by The Nature Agency. Dedicated training is not included in the contingency plan.

3. Exercises

Wildlife aspects are exercised as part of the national contingency plan for managing oil spill or pollution incidents. Oil spill exercises did not include wildlife response in 2017.

4. Equipment and facilities

Field euthanasia is carried out with standard hunting equipment. If volunteers are involved, ammunition for guns is provided. There is a network of wildlife rehabilitation centres affiliated with the Dyrenes Beskyttelse (Animal Welfare Denmark), all of which work on a voluntary basis. Present level of experience and capacity to care for oiled wildlife is not known.

5. Partnering and funding

Tier-3 resources are not described in the Danish oiled wildlife plan.

The following authorities and organizations are partners or stakeholders in the plan:

- The Royal Danish Navy
- Aarhus University, DCE – Danish Centre for Environment and Energy

- DTU Vet, National Veterinary Institute
- Dansk Ornitologisk Forening (Danish Birdlife Partner)
- The Danish Nature Agency
- The Danish Environmental Protection Agency

Stakeholder processes have led to the agreed objectives and strategies for an OWR.

All main stakeholders are aware of the formal policy guidelines recommending the euthanasia of oiled animals. During an oiled wildlife response, stakeholders can be expected to effectively cooperate on the beach and apply predefined guidelines as appropriate. (Please report activities that have enhanced partnerships and cooperation on wildlife response preparedness, and report on enhanced funding schemes if appropriate).

6. Report on incident response to wildlife and experiences/lessons learned from them

In February a freighter ran aground near Fynshoved in the Great Strait. 200 birds had to be euthanized due to an oil spill. Local hunters and employees of The Danish Nature Agency conducted the euthanasia.

In September an oil spill in Aabenraa Harbour occurred. 5 birds were euthanized.

Country: Germany

Report submitted by:

Report on self-assessment categories:

Planning and integration

Response: Role of the authorities

The competent national authority for the management of major marine incidents is the Central Command for Maritime Emergencies (CCME), Havariekommando, located in Cuxhaven. Here the Marine Pollution Response-High Sea Section is coordinating spill response at sea, emergency towing, aerial surveillance and international affairs on behalf of the Federal Ministry of Transport. The Marine Pollution Response-Coastal Section is coordinating response to spills in coastal waters and for beach cleaning operations on behalf of the Environmental Ministries of the five Coastal States of Bremen, Hamburg, Niedersachsen, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern and Schleswig-Holstein, which allows for a unified response. Onshore oil spill response, including oiled wildlife, is the responsibility of the five coastal states. Only Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern are located at the Baltic Sea.

In Schleswig-Holstein the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Areas is the responsible authority for wildlife response. In Mecklenburg-Vorpommern the competent authority is the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment and Consumer Protection.

A response plan exists for the Schleswig-Holstein part of the Baltic Sea (western part of the Baltic Sea). The plan includes guidelines and a manual for the technical and logistical implementation of the guidelines, which describe how the competent authorities will carry out Oiled Wildlife Response in cooperation with a regional animal welfare institution. In the eastern part of the German Baltic (Mecklenburg-Vorpommern) a draft response plan exists, which needs to be finalized and, as in Schleswig-Holstein, needs to be further developed.

For major incidents in Germany a general response plan is under development which will describe the common approach for German oiled wildlife response.

Training

Training elements are e.g. collection and transport of birds, handling of equipment, health and safety aspects, communication and media (in major incidents CCME takes over the overall command of all response operations including PR work). The different tasks of oiled wildlife response are trained in special courses. Authorities responsible for oil response, animal welfare and nature conservation are conducting special regional and national courses to get prepared for their tasks during oiled wildlife response.

Oiled wildlife response (OWR) in Schleswig-Holstein is conducted by the oil combating department of the State Agency for Coastal Defence, National Park and Marine Conservation. Volunteers of the Federal Agency for Technical Relief, special wildlife response teams are trained in several aspects of OWR (laws for animal welfare, personal protective equipment, distribution of birds etc.).

A national two day course for all management aspects of oiled wildlife response in Germany has taken place in November in Cuxhaven conducted by CCME. Representatives of authorities for oil response, animal welfare and nature conservation from the different coastal states of Germany were skilled in their tasks during oiled wildlife response. Lectures were held by competent partners of authorities and organizations like ITOFF, Sea Alarm and Pro Bird.

Members of the German organization 'Pro Bird' (NGO) are continuously skilled in special courses of the EUROWA module (www.oiledwildlife.eu/eurowa). The suite of EUROWA modular courses, developed by the EUROWA project partners, build on the basic training created in 2012-2013 for initial first aid of oiled wildlife.

The new EUROWA courses include four additional levels ('advanced', 'specialist', 'section head' and 'manager') each produced in a modular form and consisting of a combination of online testing prior to admission to any of the higher level training courses. There are also course packages which combine lectures, hands-on training, skill labs, exercises and evaluation of individual skills. A pilot project to begin integration of wildlife rescue into oil spill response in Arctic Russia included a two-day EUROWA Basic Responder Course, which took place in Russia in August 2017. Elements from the EUROWA Basic Responder Course have been used in a large scale exercise organized in the Dutch Wadden Sea, which took place in early September 2017.

Exercises

Exercises for oil response already include special elements of OWR in some coastal states of Germany. Other coastal states are busy planning such exercises (e.g. Lower Saxony). In Schleswig-Holstein OWR is conducted by the oil combating department of the State Agency for Coastal Defence, National Park and Marine Conservation. Together with the Federal Agency for Technical Relief, special wildlife response teams were created that were trained as part of major oil response exercises in May 2017.

Also a table top exercise was conducted in May by the oil combating department of the State Agency for Coastal Defence, National Park and Marine Conservation involving CCME were aspects of OWR included.

Equipment and facilities

Personal protection equipment, to ensure health and safety requirements, is available regionally. Cooperation between NGO's and authorities is under development. Regional wildlife rehabilitation centers hold equipment and capabilities for limited response.

The competent authority for oil response in Schleswig-Holstein (Oil combating department of the State Agency for Coastal Defence, National Park and Marine Conservation) established special containers consisting equipment for first response to OWR. Other coastal states planning to follow this example.

Partnering and funding

Germany is a signatory to the Bonn Agreement, Helsinki Convention, DenGerNeth (Denmark Germany Netherlands) Agreement for response in the Wadden Sea and part of the North Sea, SweDenGer (Sweden Denmark Germany) for response in the southwestern Baltic and a bilateral agreement with Poland for response in the Pomeranian Bight. Via the Baltic Sea Action Plan adopted in 2007 the contracting parties agreed to integrate the subject of oiled wildlife response into oil pollution contingency plans either on a national or sub-national/local level.

Cooperation between Federal Coastal States in Germany has improved during the last decade. Regular exchange of information (meetings twice a year) between competent authorities (and CCME) is now standard in order to be prepared for Oiled Wildlife Response.

Report on incident response to wildlife and experiences/lessons learned from them

Country: Latvia

Report submitted by: State Environmental Service

Report on self-assessment categories:

7. Planning and integration

There are no positive results reached in the process of developing National Oiled Wildlife Response plan (Plan) in Latvia. Although an agreement has been reached with NGO on preparation of the Plan and application for funding prepared, the funding was not earned and future development was postponed to the next year.

8. Training

There have not been trainings regarding Oiled wildlife response in Latvia in 2017.

9. Exercises

There have not been exercises regarding Oiled wildlife response in Latvia in 2017. The last exercises on Oiled wildlife response were in 2014 as a small part of the BALEX Delta exercise in Ventspils.

10. Equipment and facilities

No specialized permanent oiled wildlife rescue/rehabilitation facilities exist in Latvia.

11. Partnering and funding

As there is no rescue/rehabilitation equipment and facilities of oiled wildlife and Latvia rely on possibility to seek for help from abroad. However, there is no established procedure for assistance requesting and its funding.

12. Report on incident response to wildlife and experiences/lessons learned from them

There were no accidents resulting oiled wildlife in Latvia in 2017.

Country: Poland

Report submitted by: The revised self-assessment and the country profile to the Report have been prepared by the General Directorate for Environmental Protection, in consultation with the Ministry of Environment and WWF Poland.

Report on self-assessment categories:

13. Planning and integration

The Ministry of Environment has organized preliminary meetings with potential stakeholders concerning establishing the national OWR plan (legal basis, scientific analysis, preventive system, provide for the risk of oil spills in Crisis Management plans, trainings, financing system, appointment of the coordinator).

All relevant authorities have been identified and a Working Group for rescue of oiled wildlife has been established. The group consists of the representatives of Polish government institutions (Ministry of Maritime Economy and Inland Navigation, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of the Interior and Administration, General Directorate for Environmental Protection, National Water Management Authority), municipal authorities (Voivodeship Offices), Maritime Offices, Maritime Search And Rescue Service, Veterinary Inspection, Wildlife Rescue Centre 'Ostoja', WWF Poland and LOTOS Petrobaltic S.A.

A draft of a national OWR plan has been prepared, but it has not been formally endorsed. Nonetheless it should be noted, that there is no need for a formal (legal) acceptance of the document, because a legal basis for OWR has been established by an act of law by the Council of Ministers that makes it mandatory to include OWR in regional (voivodeship) crisis management and civil protection contingency plans.

14. Training

First exercises and study tours, organized by WWF Poland, had an ad-hoc character. Although no national OWR plan has been formally accepted, it has been since agreed and written down in the plan that exercises should take place biannually.

For coherency, exercises and training events are jointly described below, since they are often held back to back.

The first event was a training course in Helsinki, Finland, in April 2014 for 21 participants from different, mainly environmental, institutions and organizations (WWF Blue Patrol volunteers, ornithologists, ZOO workers, veterinarians, representatives from the Ministry of Environment and General Directorate for Environmental Protection).

Second training course took place in Łeba, Poland, in October 2014 and brought together about 150 participants, mainly WWF Blue Patrol volunteers. The knowledge gained in Finland was transferred to Poland during this course.

In April 2015, representatives of General Directorate for Environmental Protection and a representative of WWF Poland attended a 2-day training event for European wildlife regulators. The course has been held by Sea Alarm and hosted by the Emergency Response Coordination Centre (ERCC) of the European Union in Brussels. The participants were brought up to speed with the state of the art issues of (inter)national oiled wildlife response and preparedness, including aspects of management, financial planning and administration and aftercare/claims.

In fall, 2017 a 2-day training course in Gdańsk, Poland has been organized by the Ministry of the Environment and WWF Poland. It consisted of two parts, a theoretical course and a practical field exercise. The target group of the event was veterinarians and volunteers (chiefly WWF Blue Patrol volunteers), but it was also attended by representatives of other fields (nature protection authorities, SAR).

In October, 2017 representatives of General Directorate for Environmental Protection and a representative of the Ministry of Maritime Economy and Inland Navigation attended a seminar and training event in Helsinki, Finland. During the seminar information on national programmes and activities has been shared between the participants. The 1-day course has been focused on OWR management and was provided by Sea Alarm.

Next training event in OWR is scheduled to take place in 2019. In the meantime, in 2018 training will be provided (by WWF Poland) for those volunteers who did not participate in the training in Gdansk

WWF Poland also translated the manual: *Oiled Wildlife Response Protocols in the Central Baltic Sea* into Polish. The translated document was published on the website as a teaching aid and distributed among participants of exercises.

15. Exercises

The stakeholders have been identified and most of them have assumed their roles in OWR. The key personnel has received diversified training, but there are no clear job descriptions written down. There are new parties interested in being trained (ornithologists, bird ringers), and parties that have already undergone some training are willing to continue broadening their knowledge and experience, i.a. WWF Blue Patrol volunteers, veterinarians from rehabilitation centres, national and landscape parks employees, nature protection authorities, Maritime Search and Rescue Service, etc.

The need for continuous training at different levels, from volunteers to managers, is recognized. Several persons from various fields (nature protection authorities, veterinarians, volunteers) have received training sufficient to train other local responders should the need arise, and assist abroad if called upon.

16. Equipment and facilities

The Ministry of Maritime Economy and Inland Navigation declared that some of Polish harbours or fishing marinas could dedicate some space for mobile equipment and/or protective clothing storage (Łeba, Rowy, Ustka, Jarosławiec, Darłowo, Bobolin, Dźwirzyno). The Director of Maritime Office in Słupsk can make a multifunctional car (for moving heavy equipment and removing post-washing oil contaminated water) available for trainings and OWR actions. The Director of Maritime Office in Szczecin has offered to organize dead birds' storage and disposal if needed. Nevertheless, no analysis of the completeness of equipment stockpiles' has been made.

Organizations and institutions interested in OWR, owing to the training courses they attended and the OWR manual translated into Polish, have necessary knowledge about required equipment and actions that need to be taken in case of an oil spill, but at the moment only small size facilities are readily available and ready to response to small scale incident scenarios. In case of a bigger incident, field facilities can be set up, equipped and staffed with personnel that received training. Such an arrangement is a conscious decision, based on an analysis of the past, which resulted in no records of serious oil spill events on the Polish coast. Due to a general improvement of maritime regulations and traffic, even the number of recorded accidental oiled wildlife cases (usually bird carcasses) found on the shore line has significantly declined. Therefore, it was deemed a better use of the very limited resources to dedicate them to training personnel and focusing on tightening cooperation between different parties engaged in OWR, than pouring them into equipment, which would have small chance of being used but would generate further costs (maintenance).

17. Partnering and funding

Oil exploration and production company LOTOS and the Ministry of the Environment have agreed to establish a fund for some ad hoc activities (e.g. OWR actions during relatively small oil spill incidents). Thanks to participation in international meetings and exercises, quality tier-3 resources for response assistance have been identified and discussions on mobilisation procedures took place. Procedure for

mobilisation of Tier-3 response has been written down and incorporated to the draft of national oiled wildlife response plan.

18. Report on incident response to wildlife and experiences/lessons learned from them

A minor incident has been recorded on March 8, 2017 in Gdańsk. A small amount of unidentified oil (possibly leaked ship fuel) has been spotted in Shiprepair Yard, Gdańsk. 3 specimens of Mute Swan have been affected. The spill has been handled by the Port Fire Brigade, Maritime Office in Gdynia and Port of Gdynia Authority. The birds were first spotted at 6:30 am close to the spill area and in the following several hours were caught (2 specimens by "Ostoja" employees, 1 specimen by a local bird ringer) and treated by the Pomeranian Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre "Ostoja". The activities followed the rules of an OWR procedure (observation, collection, securing for transport, transport, intake, health assessment, first aid, stabilization, washing, drying, poisoning treatment, waterproofing, release).

Lessons learned:

- training is important - veterinarians and "Ostoja" volunteers having received dedicated OWR training beforehand were able to act calmly, purposefully and in an organized way;
- it took three separate turns of washing to fully clean one Mute Swan;
- the full treatment course (from intake to release) took on average 26 days (19, 24, 34);
- it is important to remember that the post-rescue part taking place in rehabilitation centres takes a lot of effort, time and resources – it is also essential to count the rescue action as successful.

Filled-in SAT Poland

Needed for (cost) effective oiled wildlife response	To be initiated	Important gaps to be filled	Strong basis	World class
Planning and integration	<input type="checkbox"/> Only an oil spill response plan exists; it may or may not have reference to OWR <input type="checkbox"/> No authority so far has taken responsibility to oversee (the quality of) wildlife response and preparedness <input type="checkbox"/> It is no common rationale for (the development of) an integrated OWR plan.	<input type="checkbox"/> It is recognized that OWR needs a plan; meetings have taken place, but no draft document written as yet <input type="checkbox"/> One authority has taken responsibility to take a lead on plan development, but other relevant authorities are not engaging as yet <input type="checkbox"/> A scenario/risk analysis has resulted in a clear picture of what is needed and who needs to do what	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A mature plan has been developed on the basis of scenario analysis, but not (fully) formalised or integrated as yet <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All relevant authorities are engaged with the OWR plan, by formal decision <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All relevant parties (Authority-NGO-Private) have been brought around the table and have divided and agreed roles, responsibilities and development tasks	<input type="checkbox"/> OWR plan formalised and fully integrated with all relevant oil spill plans (at sea response, coastal response, regional plans), and implemented via a multi-year programme and budget <input type="checkbox"/> Annual activities demonstrate full commitment with all signatories of the plan and significant preparedness improvements thanks to training and exercises in which all signatories participate <input type="checkbox"/> Progressively the preparedness is increasing according to plan and budget; Risks are managed
Exercises	<input type="checkbox"/> No OWR exercises take place <input type="checkbox"/> There is no actor who is interested to organise OWR exercises <input type="checkbox"/> The importance of exercises such as table tops, field exercises and facility exercises is acknowledged but not acted upon	<input type="checkbox"/> Exercises have had an ad hoc character and were not related to a plan or training programme <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wildlife aspects are exercised by one or more parties but not by everyone together <input type="checkbox"/> Ad hoc exercises were limited to table tops and/or simple field exercises	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exercises take place coherently every year and look at different aspects of a response <input type="checkbox"/> Exercises are attended by all stakeholders together but there is no clear relation with training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Exercises are structural but a large mobilisation exercise testing the build up and operations of a facility has not been held to date	<input type="checkbox"/> Exercises take place according to a pre-defined schedule that directly relates to the agreed plan together <input type="checkbox"/> Wildlife aspects are exercised by all stakeholders together and aiming at letting trained officers working <input type="checkbox"/> There is a full diversity of scheduled exercises (table top, field, facility) as part of a formal plan-related exercise programme
Training	<input type="checkbox"/> Roles and responsibilities in a wildlife response are not clarified and not discussed between stakeholders <input type="checkbox"/> There is no in-country expertise available to provide training courses <input type="checkbox"/> There are parties interested in being trained	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Some but not all stakeholders have assumed their roles in a wildlife response and train their key personnel to be able to take responsibilities according to clear job descriptions <input type="checkbox"/> Training at different levels (convergent responder, advanced responder, section heads, manager) is recognized, but training is limited to the volunteer (convergent) level. <input type="checkbox"/> Management roles are not trained	<input type="checkbox"/> Roles and responsibilities are defined as job descriptions as part of an agreed plan and a training programme has been agreed and is centrally coordinated, delivering key personnel from different organisations <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training at most levels is recognised and taking place <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Training packages aim at international standards allowing trained staff to assist abroad if called upon	<input type="checkbox"/> Trained personnel from different stakeholder organisations is offered regular opportunities to exercise together, to practice their skills in realistic scenarios <input type="checkbox"/> A centrally coordinated training programme is aiming at delivering responders at all levels and ensuring various individuals can take key roles in the higher management positions. <input type="checkbox"/> Trained staff are qualified according to international standards to assist with training other responders or responders abroad
Equipment and facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> The role of facilities in OWR is recognised, but plans to realise them have not been developed or tested. <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment stockpiles are unknown or absent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> It is clear what facilities are needed for different purposes in a wildlife response. At this stage, only small size facilities can be used or developed, equipped and staffed, relating to relatively unchallenging incident scenarios <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Equipment stockpiles are available in-country, but an analysis of their completeness has not been made	<input type="checkbox"/> The use and development of facilities has been described in the plan and scripts and criteria are available for scaling up facility size to a desired maximum level that can be equipped and staffed <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment stockpiles and lists of equipment and consumables have been drawn up as well as an updated list of manufacturers and providers	<input type="checkbox"/> The use and development of fit-for-purpose facilities is the subject of specific exercises in an exercise programme in which the performance of contractors and responsible organisations is regularly tested and evaluated <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment mobilisation in relation to facility build up and field activities is regularly tested and evaluated as part of an exercise programme
Partnering and funding	<input type="checkbox"/> No dedicated central funds are explicitly available for wildlife preparedness development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Funds are available to the extent that some ad hoc activities can be financed; there is no multi-year approach nor budget available	<input type="checkbox"/> A multi-year budget has been created to finance a number of activities, contracts and equipment investments. Still it is	<input type="checkbox"/> A multi-year budget has been created that allows one or more key stakeholders to coordinate an all encompassing programme and overseeing investments, training and

	<p><input type="checkbox"/> It is recognised that wildlife impacts or response can be controversial in terms of public reactions, but no multi-stakeholder activities have been organised to date to explore common ground and solutions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> There is a high reliance on quality tier-3 resources from abroad, but the procedures to invite and integrate a tier-3 team have not been discussed or described.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Multi-stakeholder meetings have been discussing wildlife impacts and options for a response, and it is clear that different views and approaches are possible, but no actions have been taken to find solutions in bridging different opinions</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Quality tier-3 resources for response assistance have been identified and discussions take place on mobilisation procedures, but no formal procedure has been agreed nor described</p>	<p>expected from various key stakeholders to contribute in-kind to the agreed preparedness level</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Multi-stakeholder processes have led to the agreed objectives and strategies for an OWR</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The assistance from quality tier-3 resources have been described as part of the wildlife response plan. Tier-3 mobilisation however is not part of an exercise programme</p>	<p>exercises, and provide professional staff to undertake key roles and responsibilities in the management of a response; a key authority oversees that targets are met by the programme</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> A response will involve a broad range of stakeholders in the response activities, ensuring different viewpoints are respected and publicly communicated as of one voice so that the public is likely to support the response and its decision taking</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> The assistance from quality tier-3 resources is described as part of the wildlife response plan and mobilisation procedures are regularly exercised and tested</p>
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